UNITED
NATIONS

TD

United Nations
Conference
on Trade and
Development

Distr.
GENERAL

TD/B/COM.1/19
27 July 1998

Original: ENGLISH

TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT BOARD
Commission on Trade in Goods and Services,
and Commodities
Third session
Geneva, 28 September 1998
Item 2 of the provisional agenda

PROVISIONAL AGENDA AND ANNOTATIONS

I. PROVISIONAL AGENDA

1. Election of officers

2. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

3. Ways and means of enhancing the utilization of trade preferences by developing countries, in particular LDCs, as well as further ways of expanding preferences

4. Scope for expanding exports of developing countries in specific services sectors through all GATS modes of supply, taking into account their interrelationship, the role of information technology and of new business practices

5. Reports of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission

6. Provisional agenda for the fourth session of the Commission

7. Other business

8. Adoption of the report of the Commission to the Trade and Development Board.

GE.98-5II23

II. ANNOTATIONS TO THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA

Item 1 Election of officers

1. In accordance with rule 18 of the rules of procedure of the main Committees of the Trade and Development Board, the Commission shall elect a Chairman, five Vice-Chairmen and a Rapporteur from among the representatives of its members, taking into account the need to ensure equitable geographical distribution. Rule 19 of the rules of procedure states that the Bureau of the Commission shall consist of seven members (i.e. four members from Lists A and C combined, two members from List B and one member from List D referred to in the annex to General Assembly resolution 1995 (XIX) as amended).

2. Accordingly, following the cycle of rotation established after UNCTAD IX, the bureau for the third session of the Commission shall be as follows: Chairman from List D; Rapporteur from List C; and five Vice-Chairmen (3 from Lists A and C, and 2 from List B).

Item 2 Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

3. The provisional agenda for the third session of the Commission, as reproduced in section I above, was approved by the Commission at its second session on 21 November 1997 (TD/B/45/2, annex IV).

4. Concerning the organization of the work of the session, the Commission has five days available to it. It is suggested that the agenda items be taken up sequentially, with the first plenary meeting on Monday, 28 September, being devoted to procedural matters, introductory statements and the commencement of the discussion under item 3. The last plenary meeting, on Friday, 2 October, would be devoted to the adoption of any formal action and to items 7 and 8.

5. The secretariat will prepare a detailed programme of the session, which will be made available on the first day of the session.

Documentation

TD/B/COM.1/19 Provisional agenda and annotations

Item 3 Ways and means of enhancing the utilization of trade preferences by developing countries, in particular LDCs, as well as further ways of expanding preferences

6. This item will serve to revitalize the debate on GSP and other unilateral trade preferences and their role in the new trading environment. The Commission session provides an opportunity to explore new major policy initiatives to enhance preference schemes. Initiatives may include special measures for LDCs, enhanced burden sharing, development-friendly operation of preferential schemes, harmonization of preferential rules of origin, and the search for a new concept of special and differential treatment for developing countries.

7. This item will also provide the opportunity to discuss strengthening and reorientation of technical cooperation in order to place greater focus on enabling LDCs to make better use of GSP preferences, while adapting technical cooperation for more advanced developing countries to their changing needs.

Documentation

TD/B/COM.1/20 Report by the UNCTAD secretariat

Item 4 Scope for expanding exports of developing countries in specific services sectors through all GATS modes of supply, taking into account their interrelationship, the role of information technology and of new business practices

8. This item will permit an examination of opportunities and challenges for developing countries in expanding trade in services in the post-Uruguay Round environment. Sectors where some developing countries have created export niches may provide an indication of export opportunities for other developing countries. Some of these sectors have been identified in the report, particularly those which lend themselves to supply through cross-border electronic commerce. Furthermore, this item will permit an examination of the interrelationships amongst the modes of supply of services, taking into account the impact of new technologies. The report draws upon the experience of the expert meetings convened to examine particular service sectors.

9. At the same time, attention has to be drawn to the obstacles that can hinder export expansion, such as visa regulations, licensing and qualification requirements and technical standards, and supply-side constraints which still prevent many developing countries from taking advantage of new market opportunities. Finally, this item will provide the opportunity to examine export strategies and the scope of future initiatives at the national, regional and multilateral levels.

Documentation

TD/B/COM.1/21 Report by the UNCTAD secretariat

Item 5 Reports of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission

10. In accordance with paragraph 114 of "A Partnership for Growth and Development" (TD/378), subsidiary bodies should report technical matters discussed at the expert level to the parent Commission, which may transmit them to the Board as appropriate. The Commission will consider their findings and discuss the policy implications. The Commission should, when appropriate, make the results of its expert meetings available to other relevant Commissions.

11. In addition under this item, and further to Board decision 445(EX-16), the attention of the Commission will be drawn to the report of the Secretary-General of UNCTAD on the Ad Hoc Meeting on GSP, GSTP and New Initiatives for LDCs.

Documentation

TD/B/COM.1/16 TD/B/COM.1/EM.5/3	Report of the Expert Meeting to Examine the Effectiveness and Usefulness for Commodity-dependent Countries of New Tools in Commodity Markets: Risk Management and Collateralized Finance
TD/B/COM.1/17 TD/B/COM.1/EM.6/3	Report of the Expert Meeting on Strengthening the Capacity for Expanding the Tourism Sector in Developing Countries, with Particular Focus on Tour Operators, Travel Agencies and Other Suppliers
TD/B/COM.1/18 TD/B/COM.1/EM.7/3	Report of the Expert Meeting on Strengthening Capacities in Developing Countries to Develop their Environmental Services Sector
UNCTAD/ST/AC.1/1	Report of the Secretary-General of UNCTAD on his Ad Hoc Meeting on GSP, GSTP and New Initiatives for LDCs

Item 6 Provisional agenda for the fourth session of the Commission

12. In accordance with rule 8 of the rules of procedure of the main Committees, during the session, the secretariat will submit a draft provisional agenda for the fourth session of the Commission.

13. Furthermore, in accordance with the decision taken at UNCTAD IX (para. 114 of "A Partnership for Growth and Development"), the Commission may convene expert meetings of short duration, not exceeding three days, in order to benefit from a higher level of technical expertise. Expert meetings should receive from the parent Commission precise terms of reference in the light of the provisional agenda for the fourth session. The Commission is expected to decide on the expert meetings to be convened during 1999.

Item 7 Other business

Item 8 Adoption of the report of the Commission to the Trade and Development Board

14. The report of the Commission will be adopted at the final plenary meeting of the third session and submitted to the Trade and Development Board for consideration.